



**PRESS RELEASE**

Through October 16<sup>th</sup> 2004

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## **Patuxent Wildlife Festival Celebrates a Year of Anniversaries**

Celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Patuxent Wildlife Festival, Saturday October 16<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to 3PM at the National Wildlife Visitor Center, Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, MD. Festivities will include live animal demonstrations, research exhibits, wildlife conservation tram tours, trail walks, and children's activities. There will also be research demonstrations and behind-the-scenes tours of the normally-closed U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. A 10:30 AM ceremony at the Visitor Center will highlight "Research for Conservation: Past, Present and Future" as Patuxent celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Wildlife Visitor Center, the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of Patuxent Research Refuge, and the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Activities at the Visitor Center and an open house at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center will follow the ceremony (approx. 11:30 AM).

According to Dr. Judd Howell, Center Director of the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, "The Patuxent Research Refuge is the only national wildlife refuge created specifically to support wildlife research. Sixty-five years of wildlife research conducted at Patuxent has included studying the effects of the pesticide DDT on birds, and the captive breeding of endangered bald eagles and whooping cranes for reintroduction into the wild. The festival will showcase a number of programs highlighting our research activities; and visitors will have a chance to see endangered whooping cranes in their breeding facilities."

Brad Knudsen, Refuge Manager, emphasizes the importance of Patuxent Research Refuge as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. "Today the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge System has expanded to include over 540 refuges in all 50 states encompassing over 94 million acres. Patuxent is able to carry out the traditional mission of providing wildlife habitat, while also studying wildlife needs through the unique partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey."

The National Wildlife Visitor Center is located off of Powder Mill Road between the Baltimore Washington Parkway and Rt. 197, just south of Laurel, MD. For more information or directions visit <http://patuxent.fws.gov> or call 301.497.5763 (TDD 301.497.5779). Please contact the refuge at least two weeks prior to the event if you have special needs.

-USFWS/USGS-

**MEDIA NOTE:** Pre-event media access to behind-the-scenes research areas may be arranged by calling 301-497-5503.